



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

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**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller
Judiciary Committee
March 16, 2009**

**House Bill 6664, An Act Concerning Revisions to Various Statutes
Concerning the Criminal Justice System**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, on House Bill 6664, *An Act Concerning Revisions to Various Statutes Concerning the Criminal Justice System*. My comments are limited to section 9 of the proposal.

This section would transfer from the State's Attorneys to the court the responsibility for ordering transcripts of sentencing proceedings and for providing those transcripts to the Board of Pardons and Parole. We recognize that it is important for the Board of Pardons and Parole to have this information and do not object to amending the statute to give the Branch responsibility for providing the transcripts to the Board. In fact, we have already assumed that responsibility. However, we must point out that this requirement has been an unfunded mandate since it was first enacted in 1997.

As the Committee should be aware, the State's Attorneys were never provided with the funding they needed to comply with this law since it was first enacted in 1997, and therefore were unable to do so. After the Cheshire incident in 2007, the fact that the Board of Pardons and Parole did not have sentencing transcripts was given much attention and, as a result, the Judicial Branch took over the task of providing transcripts to the Board. Since that time, our court reporters have worked countless hours on what was a huge backlog of transcripts. To date they have produced 11,765 sentencing

transcripts, all of which have been put into a database developed by the Branch that can be accessed by the Board. The Branch has expended in excess of \$88,000.00 on these transcripts, none of which has been specifically funded. During these difficult times of budget rescissions and uncertainty this cost is becoming increasingly difficult to absorb. I would urge the Committee to consider this as you move the bill forward.

I would also like to let you know that we believe the language of this section needs some work, and that we would be happy to work with the proponent to arrive at mutually agreeable language.

Thank you for your consideration.